

SENATE RESOLUTION 103

By Williams

A RESOLUTION to recognize Martha Irwin on the occasion of her retirement.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those state employees who in their years of work have performed with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm; and

WHEREAS, Martha Irwin is one such estimable person who has served the State of Tennessee with distinction for 35 years, the last 13 with the Title and Registration Division of the Department of Safety and the last nine as its Director; and

WHEREAS, a lifelong resident of Thompson's Station, Martha Irwin is an active and important part of her community; she began her career as an account technician with the Tennessee Department of Revenue in 1967, while attending college at both the University of Tennessee at Nashville and Nashville State Technical Institute; and

WHEREAS, Martha Irwin was promoted to supervisor of Privilege Taxes and in 1978 became audit manager; ten years later she was named Assistant Director of Title and Registration for the Motor Vehicle Division (MVD), and soon after, attended her first meeting of the International Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA); and

WHEREAS, having found MVD isolated from other state agencies, Ms. Irwin saw participation in AAMVA as a new opportunity to share thoughts and borrow ideas from other jurisdictions; she embraced the organization and for fifteen years participated in such capacities as the Vehicle Registration and Title Committee Work Group, the Financial Responsibility Standing Committee, Region II Board member and officer, International Board member, International 1st and 2nd Vice Chair, and, notably serving as Executive Chair of the International Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators since 2001; and

WHEREAS, in 1990, MVD was renamed the Title and Registration Division and was transferred to the Department of Safety, and in 1994, Martha Irwin was named its Director; in that role, she faced a chaotic condition in the Division's personnel and a title application backlog of 160,000, which meant months to receive a title, jeopardizing the sale of vehicles for the industry and putting lienholders at risk; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Irwin brought her considerable administrative abilities to bear on the problem, appointing competent key personnel, instituting new policies and improving communication with county clerks; a management team was trained, and contracts were initiated to permit more clerks to issue titles for the division; and

WHEREAS, those and other reforms, including the use of a geographical team concept, brought the division into efficient operation; through her appointment as Executive Chair of AAMVA, Martha Irwin secured for Tennessee recognition as a leader in innovative programs, such as the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System (NMVTIS) which the division implemented in 2000. This national system for sharing information relating to ownership and history of vehicles resulted in a significant reduction in the fraudulent practice of circumventing other jurisdictions' title laws and registration fees; and

WHEREAS, Martha Irwin exemplifies the spirit and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; she experiences much pride and joy through her relationships with her children and grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, creatively filling her leisure time, Ms. Irwin enjoys sewing, refinishing furniture, baking her famous homemade breads, or tending her vegetable and flower gardens; she competes in ballroom dancing and has won more than 50 first place medals in national competitions, bringing the same boundless enthusiasm to these activities as she does to her professional roles; and

WHEREAS, throughout her estimable career, Martha Irwin has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of her colleagues and the members of this General Assembly; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we extend to Martha Irwin our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement and every continued success in her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.